

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8802

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR GR TU

SUBJ: PRESS REACTION TO ROME MEETING OF GREEK AND TURKISH
FOREIGN MINISTERS

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL INTERVIEW IN LE MONDE
OVERSHADOWED ATHENS PRESS REACTION MAY 20 TO BITSIOS-
CAGLAYANGIL TALKS IN ROME. FOR MAIN PART RESULTS OF TALKS WERE
RECEIVED WITHOUT GREAT ENTHUSIASM BY PRESS HERE. GOVERNMENT
SOURCE, ON BACKGROUND BASIS, IS WIDELY QUOTED IN PRESS AS
SAYING IT WAS NOT CERTAIN WHETHER PRIME MINISTERS CARAMANLIS AND
DEMIREL WOULD MEET IN BRUSSELS LATER IN MONTH, IN CONTRAST
WITH FM CAGLAYANGIL EARLIER REMARK IN ROME THAT MEETING OF
TWO PREMIERS WAS ARRANGED. END SUMMARY.

2. ATHENS PRESS AND RADIO/TV MAY 20 GAVE TOP BILLING TO
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PM DEMIREL'S INTERVIEW IN LE MONDE MAY 19 IN WHICH HE SAID

INTER ALIA THAT GREECE HAS TO ACCEPT DE FACTO SITUATION ON CYPRUS AND NO LONGER HAS THE POSSIBILITY OF ASKING CONCESSIONS IN POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS. PRESS ACCOUNTS COMBINED TREATMENT OF TOUGH STATEMENTS BY DEMIREL IN LE MONDE INTERVIEW WITH COVERAGE OF BITSIOS-CAGLAYANGIL ROME TALKS. CONCERNING LATTER NEWSPAPERS REPORTED THAT AFTER COMMUNIQUE HAD BEEN READ IN ROME TWO MINISTERS TOLD NEWSMEN THAT THEY WERE SATISFIED AT THE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE TALKS WHICH TOOK PLACE IN A FAVORABLE ATMOSPHERE. BITSIOS IS QUOTED AS TELLING REPORTERS TALKS MARKED START OF "PROCESS OF CONSULTATIONS" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

3. AT SAME TIME PRESS NOTED THAT CIRCLES CLOSE TO GREEK DELEGATION FELT CERTAIN PESSIMISM. TURKISH SIDE INSISTED AEGEAN DISPUTE BE SETTLED THROUGH BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF ALL OTHER PENDING ISSUES. GREEK SIDE FAVORED RECOURSE TO INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE, WHICH HAD BEEN ACCEPTED EARLIER IN PRINCIPLE BY TURKEY. PRESS ALSO NOTED THAT FACT COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS WORKING ON CYPRUS PROBLEM TERMINATED AFTER ONLY TWO MEETINGS SUGGESTED THAT EFFORTS TO MAKE PROGRESS IN THIS AREA WERE UNSUCCESSFUL. CAGLAYANGIL'S COMMENT THAT HE HAD RESERVATIONS REGARDING HOPES FOR SPEEDY CYPRUS SETTLEMENT WAS ALSO REPORTED WIDELY.

4. ROME COMMUNIQUE RELEASED MAY 19 WAS CARRIED AS FOLLOWS IN SEMI-OFFICIAL ATHENS NEWS AGENCY BULLETIN: "THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF GREECE AND TURKEY MET IN ROME FROM MAY 17-19, ACCOMPANIED BY THEIR EXPERTS. QUESTIONS RELATIVE TO THE CONTINENTAL SHELF ON THE AEGEAN SEA WERE DISCUSSED, AND A FIRST STUDY TOOK PLACE OF A COMPROMISE TEXT CONCERNING THE SUBMISSION OF THE MATTER TO THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE. ON THIS OCCASION, THE TWO MINISTERS REVIEWED ALL QUESTIONS THAT HAVE A DIRECT BEARING ON RELATIONS BETWEEN THEIR TWO COUNTRIES. THE CONTINUATION OF EXPERTS' MEETINGS SHORTLY WAS AGREED. THE TWO MINISTERS' TALKS WERE HELD IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF GOOD WILL AND WITH A COMMON DESIRE TO SMOOTH THEIR DIFFERENCES. THE TWO MINISTERS AGREED TO MEET IN BRUSSELS AGAIN AT THE END OF THIS MONTH."

5. LE MONDE INTERVIEW OF DEMIREL PROVIDED MEDIA WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OPPORTUNITY TO DAMPEN WHATEVER POSITIVE PRESENTATION OF ROME TALKS MIGHT HAVE EMERGED. HEADLINES ARE INDICATIVE: "THREATS AND PROVOCATIONS ON PART OF TURKISH PREMIER" - "SUDDEN AND DRASTIC WORSENING OF RELATIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY" (ELEFTHEROS COSMOS); "DEMIREL RAISES MATTER OF THRACE - PROBABLY CARAMANLIS-DEMIREL MEETING WILL BE CANCELLED" (AKROPOLIS); "IN PROVOCATIVE INTERVIEW DEMIREL DEMANDS GREECE SUBMIT TO FAITS ACCOMPLIS" "MEETING WITH

CARAMANLIS BECOMES PROBLEMATIC" (TO VIMA); "THE TURKS TORPEDO
THE DIALOGUE" (KATHIMERINI).

6. WE WILL BE REPORTING FURTHER ON GREEK REACTIONS TO THE
ROME MEETING AS INFORMATION FROM FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES
BECOMES AVAILABLE. KUBISCH

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